

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 460**Are you a 501(c)3 organization in good standing with the IRS?**

Yes

According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?

Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

Hartford

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2025?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

364121-Roberts2022

Organization Name

Connecticut Historical Society dba Connecticut Museum of Culture and History

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

066026012

Principal Contact Name

James Williams

Title

Grants Manager

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Address

One Elizabeth Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06105
United States
[Map It](#)

Website<https://www.connecticutmuseum.org/>

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\$10,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

Our mission: We cultivate deep understanding of the history and culture of Connecticut, and its role in the United States and the world, through reflection of the past, active engagement with the present, and innovation for the future through our collections, research, educational programs, and exhibitions.

Our vision: Working with an inclusive audience to promote historical and cultural perspectives as essential tools to connect with others, shape communities, and make informed decisions.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

The Connecticut Museum serves more than 43,000 people annually at its Hartford campus and around the state through its research center, school programs, group tours, public programs for adults and families, exhibitions, special events, outreach presentations, and virtual programming.

The Museum collection is available digitally through the online catalog housed on the ConnecticutMuseum.org website and through the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA) at the University of Connecticut. The Museum maintains a social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

The Museum programs and services have been offered for decades, and today, it strives to serve ethnically, economically, and educationally diverse audiences by routinely updating existing programs and creating new ones in collaboration with community members at every stage of program development. In addition, the Connecticut Museum attempts to reduce the barrier of admission prices by offering opportunities for free or reduced admission to Title I schools and Priority schools, participates in the national Museums for All program, and offers free admission through sponsored days like Free First Weekends.

While each Museum department engages with the public, the Department of Cultural Sustainability's purpose is to strengthen living cultural heritage together with communities. Some of these activities take shape in Connecticut Museum institutional spaces, and some occur on site across the region. As Connecticut's official state folk and traditional arts program, the department's programs receive partial support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Connecticut Office of the Arts, and the Connecticut Cultural Fund. We partner inclusively and equitably with cultural experts to create events that allow people to enjoy diverse forms of artistic excellence, while also making sure that audiences leave with a more nuanced appreciation for and understanding of those art forms' rich cultural contexts.

Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.

50% of the Connecticut Museum's in-person visitation and outreach services occur in the Greater Hartford Area. However, the Connecticut Museum reaches people across the state of Connecticut through our traveling exhibitions, school programs, virtual programs, and onsite outreach activities.

In 2023, our approximate racial/ethnic visitor breakdown was:

11.28% Asian

4.25% Black / African American

4.56% Hispanic

0.25% Native American

78.24% White / Caucasian

1.42% Other

Describe your organization's governance.

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The Connecticut Museum is governed by a Board of Trustees that currently comprises 24 members. The Board leadership is elected by the Membership, and led by the Chair and Board President, and the officers of the Board each serving one-year terms. Members of the Board of Trustees are elected and serve 3-year terms. Board meetings occur on a quarterly basis and are well attended, with about 90%-100% of the committee present at all meetings.

Please describe the diversity of your board by gender and ethnicity/race. Use percentages.

The Museum's 2020 Strategic Plan reaffirms our commitment to creating and supporting a Board of Trustees and workforce representative of the community we serve. Current board composition is 40% female, 16% African American, 4% Asian, 4% Hispanic/Latinx, 4% Other, and 72% White. Our Board President is Sylvia Kelly, the Museum's first female, African American Board President, and Jason Rojas, who is Latino, is head of the Board's Governance Committee, which recruits new Board members.

What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?

100

Project Name

2025-2026 Cultural Partnership Events

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

Yes

Will the artists associated with this project be financially compensated?

Yes

Project Description

The Connecticut Museum of Culture and History seeks underwriting for its 2025 Día de Muertos and 2026 Lunar New Year Celebrations, which showcase the artistic excellence of cultural communities and provide meaningful context for audiences to deepen their understanding. These events reflect our strategy of building meaningful partnerships with diverse cultural groups statewide to enhance community well-being. This includes:

- Our Día de Muertos Community Celebration, where Mexican community partners from Hartford and Wallingford co-design an event that integrates traditional music and dance performances.
- Our Lunar New Year Celebration, where we partner with Asian American organizations to celebrate an important cultural holiday celebrated by some Asian Americans, while opening space for broader relationship-building within the broader Asian and non-Asian community. We look forward to expanding this popular event and add more culturally relevant performances.

Total estimated project budget

\$45,230.00

Project start/opening

11/01/2025

Project end/closing

03/07/2026

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Project venue

Connecticut Museum of Culture and History, CT State Community College Manchester

Project town

Hartford, CT & Manchester, CT

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

In the event's 8th year, the popularity of Dia de Muertos and the Lunar New Year celebration has grown exponentially over the years. In order to accommodate the growing audiences, the Museum has moved its Lunar New Year celebration offsite to CT State Community College, Manchester to allow for adequate performance and tabling spaces for vendors and performers. Both of these events are free and open to the public. We estimate a total of 1,700 people will attend again this season.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

The Museum promotes each event through short- and long-term strategies, including features in its biannual magazine, press releases, and online listings. Events are shared via email (8,000+), print mailers (2,000+), social media (1M impressions), and boosted posts. Promotion includes radio spots on Connecticut Public, local calendars (e.g., ctvisit.com), news websites, flyers, and yard signs. Blog posts and post-event coverage help sustain engagement.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Most of the funds will be used to pay performers from a broad range of cultural communities. Any remaining funds will be used to offset the event expenses from the related on-site programming, and event promotions.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Roberts Foundation will be recognized as a supporter on all media press releases, marketing materials, and event signage, with its logo included on all promotions. Official verbal announcements during the course of the event will also thank funders by name. In addition, the Roberts Foundation will be recognized in our magazines and annual report.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

The Connecticut Museum believes that art is a cultural production, worthy of study on its own merit as well as part of the cultural and historical contexts where it is created. As part of broadening the concept of art away from models biased toward Western European ideals, the Museum adopted the state folk and traditional arts program in 2015, transforming it into the Department of Cultural Sustainability. Artistic excellence combines the creation of a pleasing and recognizable form together with the cultural ideas that are associated with that form. It is determined by how an artist's skill is perceived by and linked to their cultural community. Without that cultural contextualization, many forms of art and the skill it takes to create them, can sometimes be opaque to the outside observer. In order to determine artistic excellence, the Museum is not an arbiter but a listener, working with different cultural communities in Connecticut to determine what they value and recommend.

How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?

These events and performances explicitly align with our mission of cultivating understanding of history and culture in context, with specific reliance on our institutional value of inclusivity, sharing authority and knowledge as equal partners. Our large events that feature performing arts are only one facet of work institution-wide—including exhibitions, educational outreach, and collection activities—to collaborate with cultural communities and learn from their expertise, include their perspectives, and become a trusted community partner.

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Building meaningful partnerships with diverse cultural groups helps us become an institution that is relevant to people, and investing our energy in doing work together with communities to pursue activities that sustain cultural vitality makes us an active partner to preserve not only the tangible artifacts of Connecticut's past, but helps to sustain the state's intangible, living cultural heritage that its people will carry into the future.

How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?

The main goals of these events are twofold: to foster cultural continuity, and to promote intercultural understanding through arts experiences that include, represent, and engage all populations regardless of background. The Día de Muertos Community Celebration and the Lunar New Year Celebration events facilitate cross-cultural understanding and encourage connection between diverse audience and community members through their shared participation in the event, as well as provide a location where community members feel like they connect culturally and intergenerationally to their heritage. Collaboration with different cultural communities ensures that these events serve community goals, whether that is providing the opportunity for youth to deepen their own appreciation of their cultural heritage and become more confident performers, or for community organizations to connect one-on-one with visitors to share new information and hear the experiences they have common with one another.

How will this project be evaluated?

Successful events will demonstrate substantial new and diverse audience participation, stimulate community dialogue, present important cultural traditions accurately and respectfully, enhance audiences' understanding, and generate new ideas for future inclusive programming. We will measure these outcomes through 2 methods: Quantitative methods: 1) Attendance numbers based on entry headcount; 2) Examining demographic information obtained through voluntary survey completion to gauge audience diversity; 3) User analytics for social media and email announcements to assess outreach. Qualitative methods: 1) Observation of audience interactions to assess degree of audience engagement; 2) Targeted question-based surveys with attendees to gauge learning; 3) Post-event feedback session with community partners to gauge their satisfaction; 4) Follow up meeting with partners to evaluate the event and develop new ideas for programming and collaboration.

Cover letter

- [Cover-Letter-2025-draft.pdf](#)

Board list

- [Board-2024-updated.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [IRS-determination-letter-CHS.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [CHS-Financial-Statements-and-Report-of-Ind-CPA-2023.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [CHS-2023-Form-990-Public-Disclosure-Copy.pdf](#)

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 460**Current year operational budget**

- [2025-APPROVED-BUDGET.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [3-31-25-Balance-Sheet.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [DDM-LNY-Budget-2025.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

Annual report

- [Annual-Report-2023-final-updated-financials.pdf](#)

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

Strategic plan

- [StrategicPlan.pdf](#)

Does your organization have a formal policy or organizational commitment to ensure that visual artists are financially compensated?

No

Grant Report

- [Connecticut-Historical-Society-dba-Grantee-Reporting-Form-.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [Artist-information-Copy.pdf](#)

Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?

Yes

Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?

Yes